

EFFECT OF READ ALONG APPLICATION ON SPEAKING AND READING SKILLS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

English language is been always the talk when it comes to public speaking. It is clearly visible the person who speaks English in front of formal meeting such as conferences, seminars other educational events is better recognized. The development of language speaking is depending upon principle of use and disuse. When we frequently use a specific language, it helps us to improve ourselves through trial and error. As the trials increase, errors decrease it suggests. The conversation has been around Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing in any language learning. These four skills are effective indicators of language performance apart from other psychological factors. The present education system, may not offer these basic language skills for each individual as the classrooms are overcrowded. Technology is now come into picture to fulfill those individual needs of language skills. There are many technological applications available that cater individual language learning necessities. The current study is an attempt in the same direction. The AI application 'Read Along' was examined to see it's effect on Speaking and Reading skills of English language. The questionnaire was used to collect data and t test and ANOVA were used for analyzing and interpreting the data. The results were compared and discussed and presented. The experimental group performed better than controlled group with respect to Speaking as well as Reading. These findings have some valuable educational implications at elementary level.

KEYWORDS: Read Along, Elementary Level, Speaking, Reading, English Language

Article History

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INTRODUCTION

Raphael (2017) indicates that English language learning is one of the necessary educational objectives at a personal, academic, and occupational level. AI is constantly growing and evolving and there are firm indications that ways of teaching and learning along with the teaching tools we use will be profoundly transformed. The development of intelligible pronunciation is an ongoing challenge to both students and teachers across all language levels. Cautela et al. (2019, p. 128) indicated that there is a link between AI applications and many thinking skills such as designing skills, which are highly sought after in the 21st century. He has illustrated that AI moves education from a traditional form to an automated education, or education through smart interactive machines. It employs natural language to produce new knowledge, and to boost supplementary educational tasks. AI applications can individualized tutoring and introduce varied educational models and streams in which languages are merged with fields of related knowledge. Thus, they offer students the chance to learn according to flexible streams that suit their different abilities and academic levels. The importance of AI

applications in education is determined by their ability to suit the needs and abilities of the learners, to work according to their educational preferences, and to monitor the progress rate of each learner. Many artificial intelligence based and customized applications can help in improving English language skills (such as listening, speaking and reading skills) with personalised lessons. Examples: - Liulishuo Odinga Fluent 8 Duolingo ELSA (English Language Speech Assistant) Read Along etc. Out of these, Read Along App is found to be more accessible, children friendly and having NLP features. Some of the features of Read Along are given below.

- Customized lessons, designed by AI for expedited learning.
- A gamut of vocabulary, situations and expressions.
- Speaking, reading and listening practice with AI.
- Priority of speaking, reading or listening decided by AI, based on levels of user.
- Real-situation English practice.
- Mini games for fun & learning.
- Manageable learning curve, enabled by AI.
- Building the ability to comprehend reading passages.
- Developing students' translation skills.
- Learning correct pronunciation.
- Enriching the student's vocabulary.
- Augmenting speaking skills for English learners.

On the basis of core features listed above, the researchers have opted Read Along to be examined among elementary level students.

Research Questions

- Is there any improvement in speaking skills of English when using Read Along App?
- Is there any improvement in reading skills of English when using with Read Along App?
- Are there any gender differences in speaking and reading when using with Read Along App?

Objectives of the Study

- To study the effect of Read Along application on speaking skills of English language at elementary level.
- To study the effect of Read Along application on reading skills of English language at elementary level.
- To study the effect of gender differences of Read Along application on skills of English language at elementary level.

Hypotheses of the Study

- There will be a significant effect of Read Along on the speaking skills of the English language on students.
- There will be a significant effect of Read Along on the reading skills of the English language on students.
- There will be no significant effect of gender differences of Read Along application on skills of English language at elementary level.

Methods of the Study

Experimental method was used in the present study. Single group Experiment- Control design was used in the present study for examining the extent to which Read along App on Speaking and Reading skills of English Language.

Table 1: Design of the Study

Planning	Implementation Phase	Assessment (Follow up)
Entire class was divided into two groups such as experimental group in which individuals were informed of the study objectives and the response mechanism of the Read Along application and they were highly motivated to use AI applications in learning English language skills.	A pre-test was taken before introducing the Read Along application, then introduced of application Read Along to the students to teach English language skills. Lesson plans were prepared integrating Read Along application for teaching students for 15 days and taught the same.	A post-test was conducted for checking the effectiveness of the application followed by a questionnaire.
Another group called controlled group in which individuals were not aware of the mechanism of the AI tool- Read Along and was used as a baseline to assess the effect of that intervention.	A pre-test was administered and then Traditional methods used to teach the controlled group of the English language. Lesson plans using Read Along were prepared for experimental group for 15 days and taught the same.	A post-test was taken for checking the effectiveness

Sample of the Study

Sadabad Inter College was selected purposively and elementary students were selected randomly. A pre-test was conducted and on the basis of score students were divided into two groups i.e experimental and controlled group and then matched pairs design for dividing them into male and female categories.

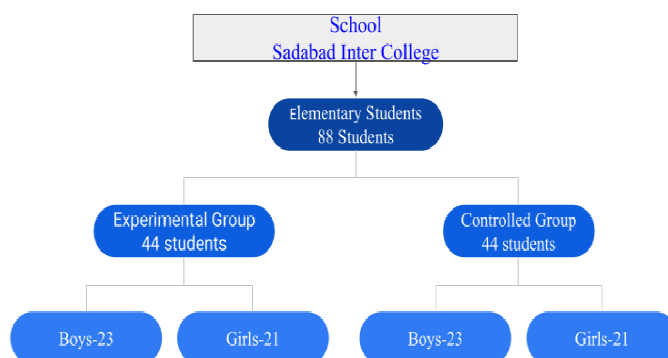


Figure 1: Sample Selection.

Selection and Development of the Tools

A questionnaire was administered to measure the ability of students' skills of learning English language by Turki Rabah Al Mukhallaf (2020)

Phase 1- The score of pre test of the experimental group before introducing the application.

Phase 2- The score of the post test followed by a questionnaire after introducing the application as pilot study to see the differences as well as effectiveness of Read Along Application.

Phase 3- The score of the controlled group followed by a questionnaire for comparison and analyzing the effect of skills of English language.

Sample Characteristics

A total number of 88 students completed the study. 46 boys and 42 girls were participated in the study ranged from 10-12 years.

Table 2: Demographic Information of the Participants Group

Groups	Mean Age	No.of Boys	No.of girls
Experimental Group	14.20	23	21
Control Group	14.70	23	21

Comparison at baseline: it was used to assess the effect of Artificial Intelligence Application (Read Along) on Speaking and Reading Skills of English language at Elementary Level. It was important to check whether the experimental and control groups were equal at the baseline or not.

Analysis of Pre-Test Scores of Speaking Skills

Table 3: Mean, S.D and Results of T Test for Pre-Test Scores of Speaking Skills

Groups	N	Mean	SD	t
Experimental Group	44	49.20	5.83	0.288
Control Group	44	51.13	7.82	

It is evident from table 3 that mean score for listening skills is higher for control group ($M=51.13$) with a lesser variability in scores ($S.D=7.82$) as compared to mean score experimental group ($M=49.20$) with slightly higher variability (5.83). However, these differences were found to be statistically insignificant as depicted by the results of t- test at 0.05. Therefore, it is evident that the experimental groups were equal to their respective control on the baseline measures of speaking skills.

Analysis of Pre-Test Scores of Reading Skills

Table 4: Mean, S.D and Results of T Test for Pre-Test Scores of Reading Skills

Groups	N	Mean	SD	t
Experimental Group	44	109	9.29	0.267
Control Group	44	114.48	11.38	

It is evident from table 4 that mean score for reading skills is higher for control group ($M=114.48$) with a lesser variability in scores ($S.D=11.38$) as compared to mean score experimental group ($M=109$) with slightly higher variability (9.29). However, these differences were found to be statistically insignificant as depicted by the results of t test at 0.05. Therefore, it is evident that the experimental groups were equal to their respective control on the baseline measures of reading skills.

The design used for the current study was single experimental control group design with pre-test post-test measurements followed by a questionnaire. It means that there was no random allocation of the students to the groups. There was a possibility that the groups may have varied at the baseline but above analysis revealed that the groups were equal at baseline for all the variables of the study.

Analysis of Significance of difference between Scores of Speaking Skills for Pre-test, Post-test

Analysis of significance of difference between scores of speaking skills for pre-test, post-test followed by the questionnaire in Experimental and control Group. (To study the effect of AI based application on speaking skills of English language at elementary level)

Table 5: Mean, S.D & Results of T Test for Speaking Skills

Group	Tests	Mean	S.D	t
Experimental Group	Pre-test	49.03	5.83	2.626
	Post-test	52.82	6.14	
Control Group	Pre-test	51.13	7.82	0.816
	Post-test	52.69	8.02	

The value of t-test in the experimental group at 0.05 implies that there is a significant difference between pre-test and post-test followed by a questionnaire whereas there is no significant difference between pre-test and post-test in the control group at 0.05 levels in speaking skills of English language.

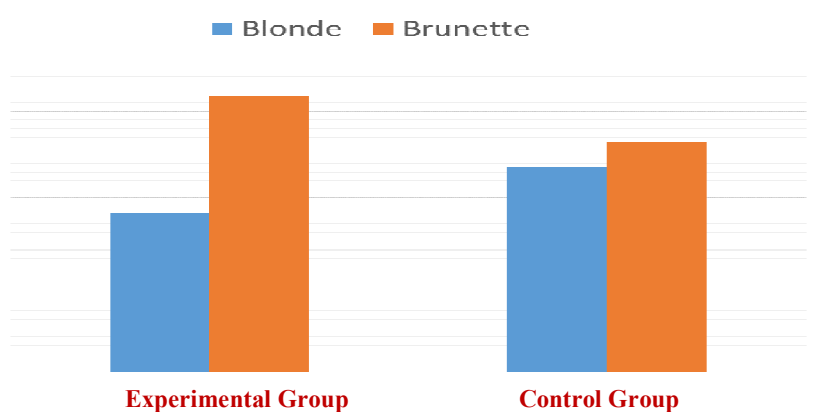


Figure 2: A Comparison of Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores of Experimental Group and Control Group; Where Blonde is a Pre Test Score. Brunette is a Post Test Score.

Analysis of significance of difference between scores of reading skills for pre-test, post-test followed by the questionnaire in Experimental and control Group.(To study the effect of AI based application on reading skills of English language at elementary level)

Table 6: Mean, S.D & Results of T Test for Reading Skills

Group	Tests	Mean	S.D	t
Experimental Group	Pre-test	109.10	9.29	2.89
	Post-test	113.41	14.31	
Control Group	Pre-test	51.13	7.82	0.816
	Post-test	52.69	8.02	

The value of t-test in the experimental group at 0.05 implies that there is a significant difference between pre-test and post-test followed by a questionnaire whereas there is no significant difference between pre-test and post test in the control group at 0.05 levels in reading skills of English language.

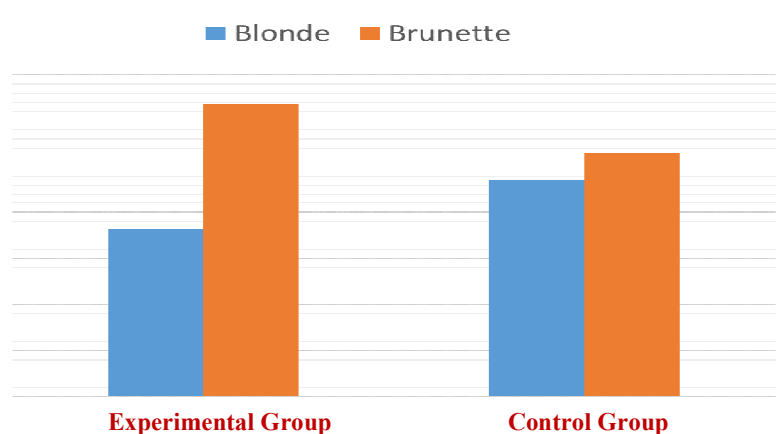


Figure 3: A Comparison of Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores of Experimental Group and Control Group; Where Blonde is a Pre Test Score. Brunette is a Post Test Score.

Analysis of significance of gender difference in Experimental group only (To study the effect of gender differences of AI based application on skills of English language at elementary level)

To Analyse the significance of gender difference in Experimental group the three-way ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) has been calculated and its summary is given in table.

Table 7: Exhibiting Summary of Three -Way Analysis of Variance. Where the Independent variable is the Read Along Application and Dependent is Gender and Skills of English language. Exhibiting Summary of Three-Way Analysis of Variance

Variable	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Significance
Read Along*gender*skills of English language	1.250	2	0.625	1.867	0.001

The obtained result shows that there is no significance difference at 0.001 levels among variances.

FINDINGS

From the above result it is clear that AI tools such as Read Along have significant effects on speaking skill and reading skills of English language at elementary level with fun and exploration. No gender differences were observed in the present study when Read Along App was used for English language skills such as speaking and reading.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

AI applications are part of contemporary trends, so it is necessary to employ it as a part of 21st century skills and the nature of the digital world and its requirements. Employment of AI applications and strategies relates to studying and accurately determining training needs in order to boost procedural practices in the light of AI strategies for teaching/learning English. They include interactive smart translation strategies through smart tools and software, voice communication strategies, strategies for diversifying scientific content and digital open sources, and strategies for communicative language teaching (enhanced with interactive voice and images). They also include strategies suitable for difficulties in language communication, strategies for computer simulation, and employment of smart programs with the help of expert systems. These are multiple programs that depend on simulation to develop skills through applications such as Read Along or so which boost learning of language skills of English language.

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